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(54) **Package for a cylindrical stack of round biscuits**

(57) A package for a plurality of substantially round biscuits arranged one over another into a cylindrical stack which is enveloped in a wrapper formed with a slit (6) for issuing/taking out biscuits therethrough, the slit being located a predetermined distance away from one of the wrapper ends (4,5).

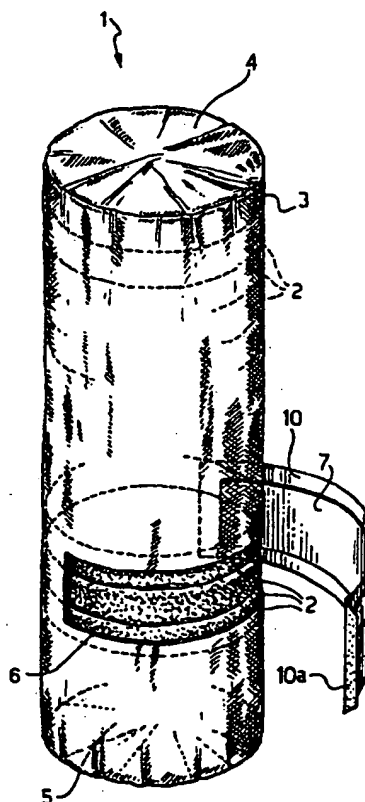


FIG. 6

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Description

[0001] The present invention broadly relates to packaging food articles of a round (circular, disk- or doughnut-like) shape, such as biscuits, toasted bread slices, and the like.

[0002] More particularly, and in connection with round-shaped biscuits by way of example, this invention relates to a package which comprises essentially a cylindrical wrapper enveloping a plurality of biscuits arranged one over another into a cylindrical pack or stack, said wrapper being formed from a flexible plastics sheet for food products, such as polythene, which is wrapped around the cylindrical stack of biscuits, welded along a generatrix line of said cylindrical stack, and folded over at the opposed ends thereof, the folded flaps being then suitably welded or glued together.

[0003] To issue packaged biscuits for consumption, a package is conventionally arranged to be opened at one end of the cylindrical wrapper by pulling up the folded flaps and rupturing their bond.

[0004] Taking the first few biscuits out of a package unsealed in this way is a comparatively straightforward operation, but getting to those further down the package becomes progressively more difficult, to the point that all or a major portion of the wrapper may have to be torn.

[0005] The consumer public is quite familiar with the unpleasant consequences of this inadequacy: loss of the protection from dust and contaminants afforded by the sealed wrapper; search for a substitute of the lost protection, as may consist of makeshift containers; biscuits likely to become broken or crumbled in trying to dig them out.

[0006] The underlying problem of this invention is to provide a novel package for food articles, such as round biscuits or the like, which can obviate the aforementioned drawbacks of the prior art.

[0007] This problem is solved, according to the invention, by a package for a plurality of biscuits or the like food articles of substantially round shape which have been arranged one over another into a substantially cylindrical stack, this package comprising essentially a sheet of a flexible plastics material for food products which is wrapped around said cylindrical stack, welded along a generatrix line of said cylindrical stack, and sealed at the opposed ends thereof, characterized in that said wrapper is formed, a predetermined distance away from at least one of said ends, with a semiannular slit for issuing/taking out the biscuits there-through, the semiannular slit being arranged to span at least one half of said wrapper circumference, and being at least as wide as said biscuits are thick, a means being also provided of covering said slit.

[0008] In a first embodiment of the invention, said cylindrical wrapper advantageously includes a semiannular strip portion located a predetermined distance away from at least one of its ends and bounded by a

tear-off weakening line which extends all around the perimeter of said portion, a substantially tab-like grasping means being associated with said wrapper portion and adapted to be pulled away along said weakening line to uncover said semiannular slit.

[0009] Preferably, said weakening line extends along three sides of said semiannular portion, the fourth side lying parallel to the generatrices of said cylindrical wrapper and an adhesive means being provided on said portion for re-attaching it to cover said semiannular slit.

[0010] The adhesive means is preferably of a permanent type and coated on the inboard side of said grasping tab.

[0011] The advantages and characteristic features of the invention will become more clearly apparent from the following detailed description of some embodiments thereof, given with reference to the accompanying non-limitative drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a package according to the invention in its open condition for taking out a biscuit;

Figure 2 shows a modified embodiment of the inventive package, in its closed condition;

Figure 3 shows a modified embodiment of the same package as in Figure 2;

Figure 4 shows the same package as in Figure 3, in its open condition for taking out a biscuit;

Figures 5 and 6 show a further modification of the inventive package in its closed and open conditions, respectively.

[0012] Referring to Figure 1, a package is shown generally at 1 for a plurality of biscuits 2 which are substantially round (circular, disk- or doughnut-like, or the like) in shape and arranged one over another into a pack or a cylindrical stack.

[0013] Said package comprises a cylindrical wrapper 3 obtained from a flexible sheet of a plastics material for food products, e.g. a polythene-polypropylene composite, which is wrapped around said stack of biscuits 2, welded along a generatrix line of said cylindrical stack and sealed at the opposed ends 4, 5 thereof.

[0014] A semiannular slit 6 is formed through said wrapper 3 a predetermined distance away from one of its ends 4, 5, e.g. the end 5, which slit extends circumferentially to a length at least equal to, but preferably slightly greater than, one half the wrapper circumference and has a width at least equal to, but preferably slightly greater than, the thickness of the packaged biscuits.

[0015] As explained in more details hereinafter, said slit 6 is used for issuing/taking out the biscuits 2 individually from the package of this invention.

[0016] According to a first embodiment of the package 1, a semiannular portion 7 of the wrapper 3 extends circumferentially a predetermined distance away from the wrapper end 5, and is bounded all around its perimeter by a tear-off weakening line (dinked line), said wrapper portion 7 being the same size and shape as the slit 6. A grasping tab 9, provided for pulling away the whole portion 7 along the tear-off line 8 so as to uncover the slit 6, is associated with said portion 7 along one of its short sides lying parallel to the generatrices of the cylindrical wrapper 3.

[0017] In a modified embodiment (Figure 3), the dinked line 8 advantageously extends along three sides only of the portion 7 of the wrapper 3, the fourth, non-dinked side (8a) extending preferably parallel to the wrapper generatrices. At the opposed side from the side 8a, said portion 7 has said grasping tab 9 associated therewith, which tab is advantageously coated on its inboard side with an adhesive of a so-called permanent type. In this case, the tearing action on the semiannular portion 7 does not result in it becoming completely separated from the wrapper 3, since said portion would still be attached to the wrapper by its non-dinked side 8a. Nevertheless, the desired slit 6 would be uncovered for issuing/taking out biscuits 2. After use, the portion 7 can be sealed back onto said slit 6 on account of the adhesive coating provided on the tab 9. Advantageously, and preferably, the grasping means for tearing off the portion 7 and replacing said portion over the uncovered slit 6 comprises, instead of the tab 9 just described, a label (not shown because conventional) of a suitable size which is also associated with the portion 7 at the non-dinked side thereof opposed from the side 8a.

[0018] With the slit 6 uncovered (Figure 4), drawing out the biscuit 2 presented thereat can be made easier if a slight pressure is exerted on the flexible wrapper 3 from the side opposite the slit 6 at the level of said biscuit.

[0019] As a biscuit is taken out of the package 1, another biscuit 2 will be driven to present itself at the slit 6 by the weight of the remaining biscuits in the stack. In turn, this newly presented biscuit may also be taken out, or the wrapper portion 7 may be resealed onto it.

[0020] In a further preferred embodiment (Figures 5 to 7), a label 10, being coated with a permanent adhesive and far exceeding said portion 7 in length and width, is stuck onto said wrapper 3 symmetrically across said portion 7. A leading section 10a of said label, which at the opposed side from the non-dinked side (8a) of the strip-like portion 7 does not cover said portion 7, is left uncoated with the adhesive and is used to grasp the label 10 for pulling it away from said wrapper. At the same time as the label is pulled off, the strip-like portion 7 is also torn off to uncover the slit 6 for issuing/taking out the packaged biscuits 2. Here again, the slit 6 can be re-sealed.

[0021] As for said slit 6, its preferred width is only slightly greater than the combined thickness of two bis-

cuits, and its distance from the wrapper end 5 is preferably equal to or slightly greater than the combined thickness of four biscuits.

[0022] The invention described hereinabove is susceptible of many changes and modifications, all within the scope of the inventive concept as defined in the appended claims.

Claims

1. A package for a plurality of biscuits or the like food articles of substantially round shape which have been arranged one over another into a substantially cylindrical stack or pack, enclosed within a wrapper consisting essentially in a flexible plastics sheet for food products which is wrapped around said cylindrical stack, welded along a generatrix line of said cylindrical stack, and sealed at the opposed ends thereof, characterized in that said wrapper (3) is formed, a predetermined distance away from at least one of said ends (4,5), with a semiannular slit (6) for issuing/taking out the biscuits therethrough, the semiannular slit being at least as wide as said biscuits are thick, a means (7,9) being also provided of covering said slit (6).
2. A package according to Claim 1, characterized in that said slit (6) exceeds in length one half the circumference of said wrapper (3).
3. A package according to Claim 1, characterized in that the width of said slit (6) is at least equal to the combined thickness of two said biscuits (2).
4. A package according to Claim 1, characterized in that the distance of said slit (6) from said one end (4,5) of the cylindrical wrapper (3) is at least equal to the combined thickness of four biscuits.
5. A package according to Claim 1, characterized in that said wrapper (3) includes a semiannular strip portion (7) located a predetermined distance away from one of said ends (4,5) and bounded by a tear-off weakening line (8) which extends all around the perimeter of said portion (7), a grasping means (9) being provided for pulling away said portion (7) along said weakening line (8) to uncover said slit (6).
6. A package according to Claim 1, characterized in that said wrapper (3) includes, located a predetermined distance away from one of said ends (4,5), a semiannular strip portion (7) bounded by a weakening dinked tear-off line (8) which extends along three sides of said portion (7), the fourth, non-dinked side (8a) lying parallel to the generatrices of said cylindrical wrapper (3), and that a grasping means (9) is associated with the opposed side of

said strip portion (7) from the non-dinked side (8a) for tearing it along said weakening line (8) to uncover said slit (6).

7. A package according to Claim 6, characterized in that said grasping means (9) is substantially in the form of an adhesive-coated tab for re-setting said portion (7) over said slit (6). 5
8. A package according to Claim 6, characterized in that said grasping means (9) comprises a label coated with a permanent-type adhesive. 10
9. A package for a plurality of biscuits (2) or the like food articles of substantially round shape which have been arranged one over another into a substantially cylindrical stack or pack, the package comprising a wrapper (3) obtained from a flexible plastics sheet for food products which is wrapped around said cylindrical stack, welded along a generatrix line of said cylindrical stack, and sealed at the opposed ends (4,5) thereof, characterized in that said cylindrical wrapper (3) is formed, a predetermined distance away from at least one of said ends (4,5), with a semiannular portion (7) bounded by a dinked line (8) extending along at least three sides thereof, the fourth, non-dinked side (8a) lying parallel to the generatrix lines of said wrapper (3), said portion (7) extending circumferentially over at least one half the circumference of said wrapper (3) and being at least as wide as the combined thickness of two of said biscuits (2); that an adhesive label (10), being wider and longer than said portion (7), is simultaneously attached to said portion and said wrapper (3), a leading section (10a) of said label being free of adhesive in order to allow the label (10) to be grasped and pulled away at the same time as said wrapper portion (7) is torn off to uncover a semiannular slit (6) for issuing/taking out said biscuits (2), as well as to allow said label (10) and said wrapper portion (7) to be reset over said slit (6). 15
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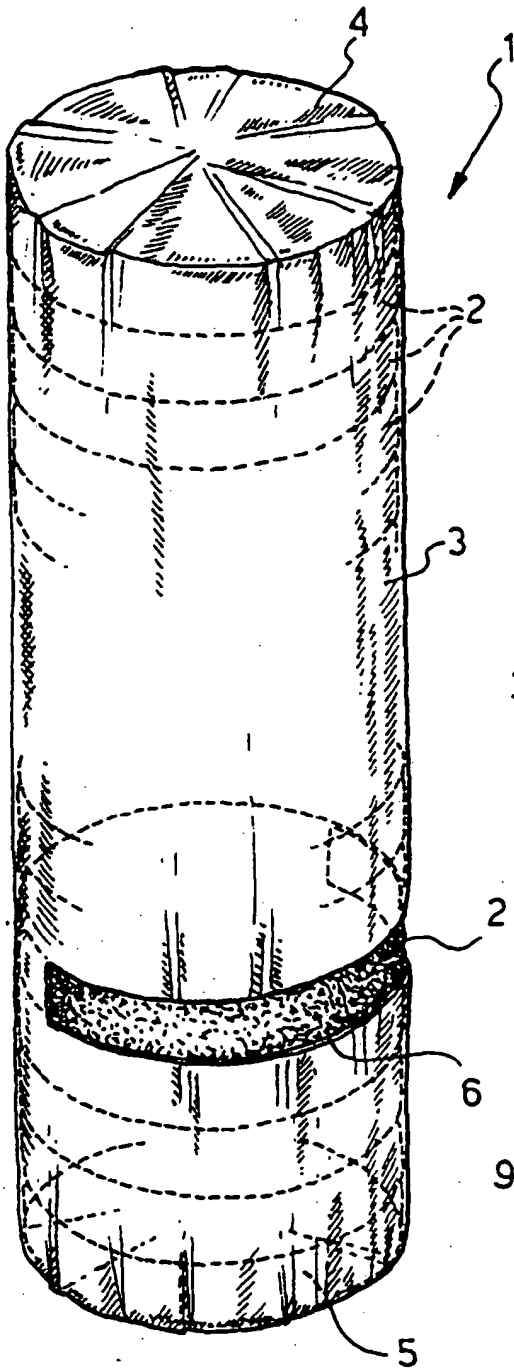


FIG.1

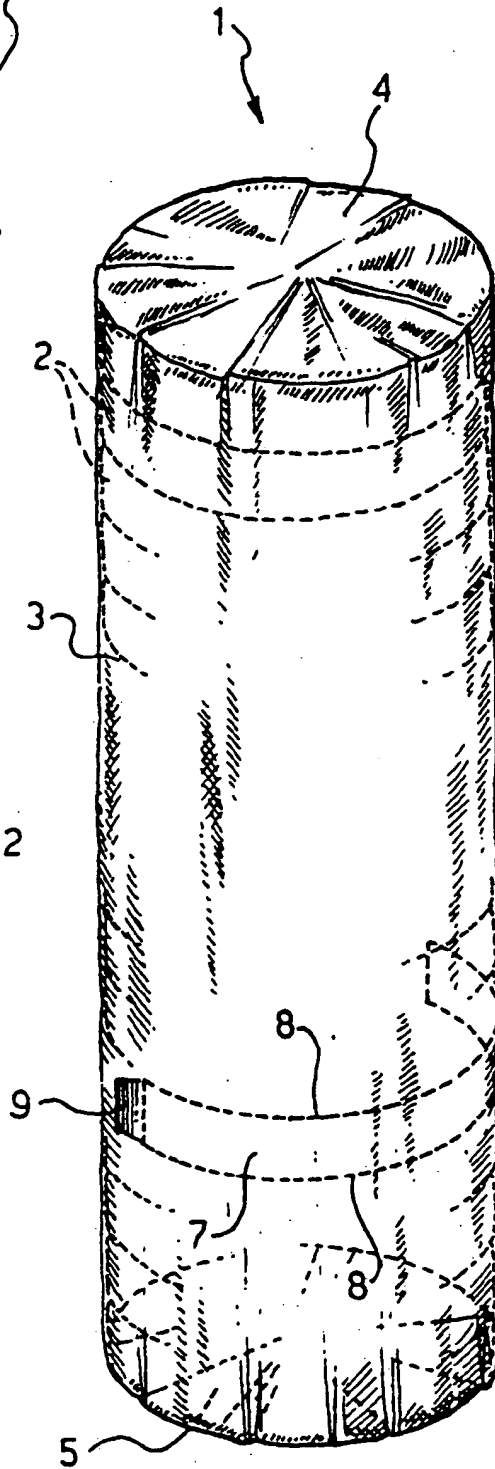


FIG.2

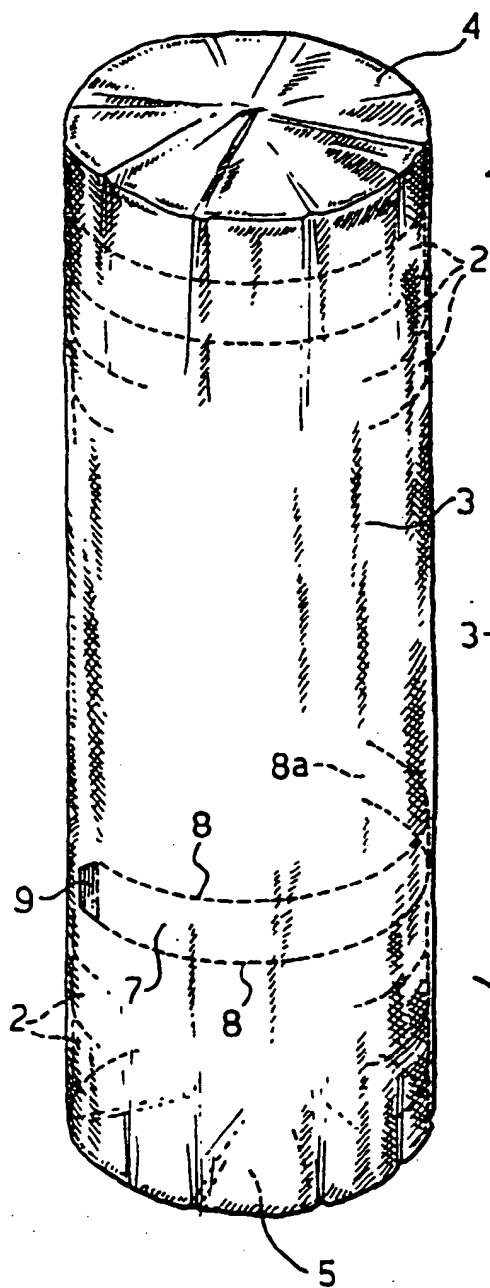


FIG.3

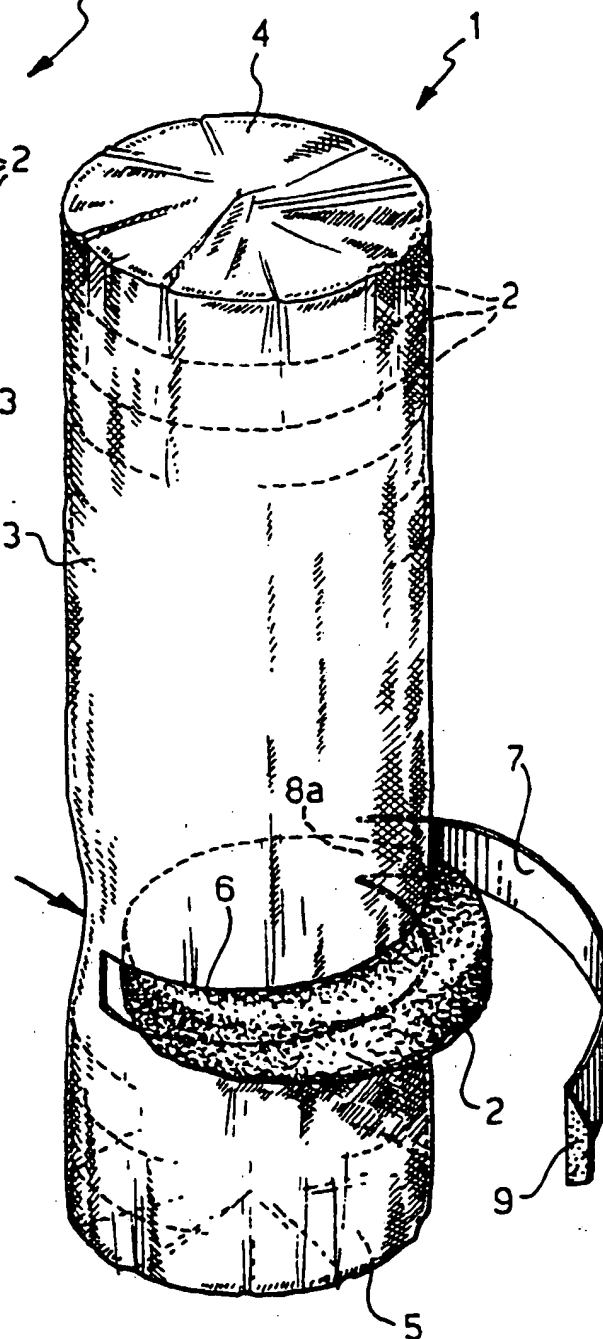


FIG.4

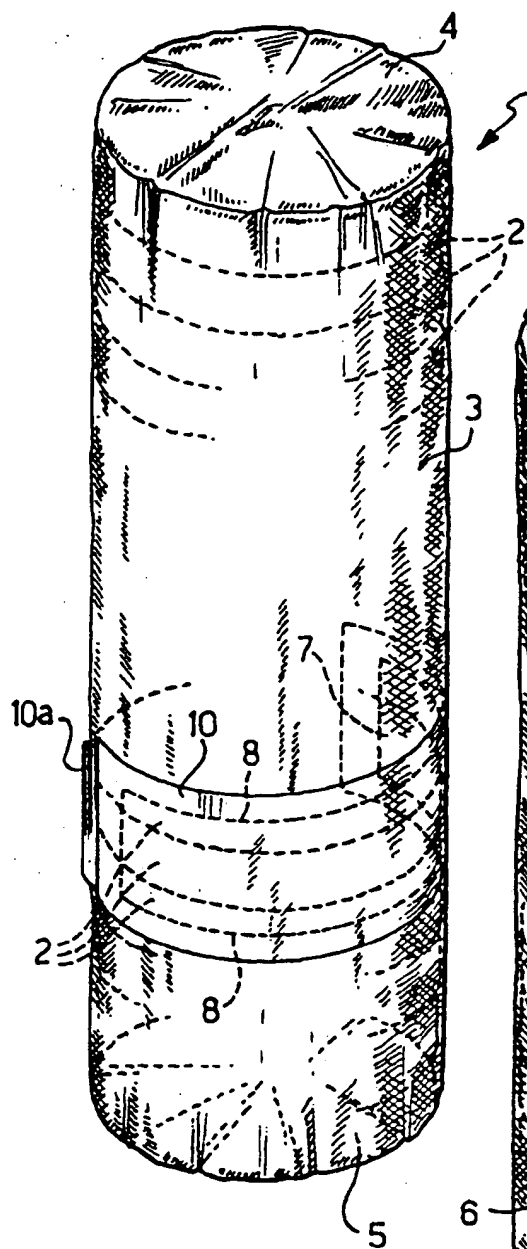


FIG. 5

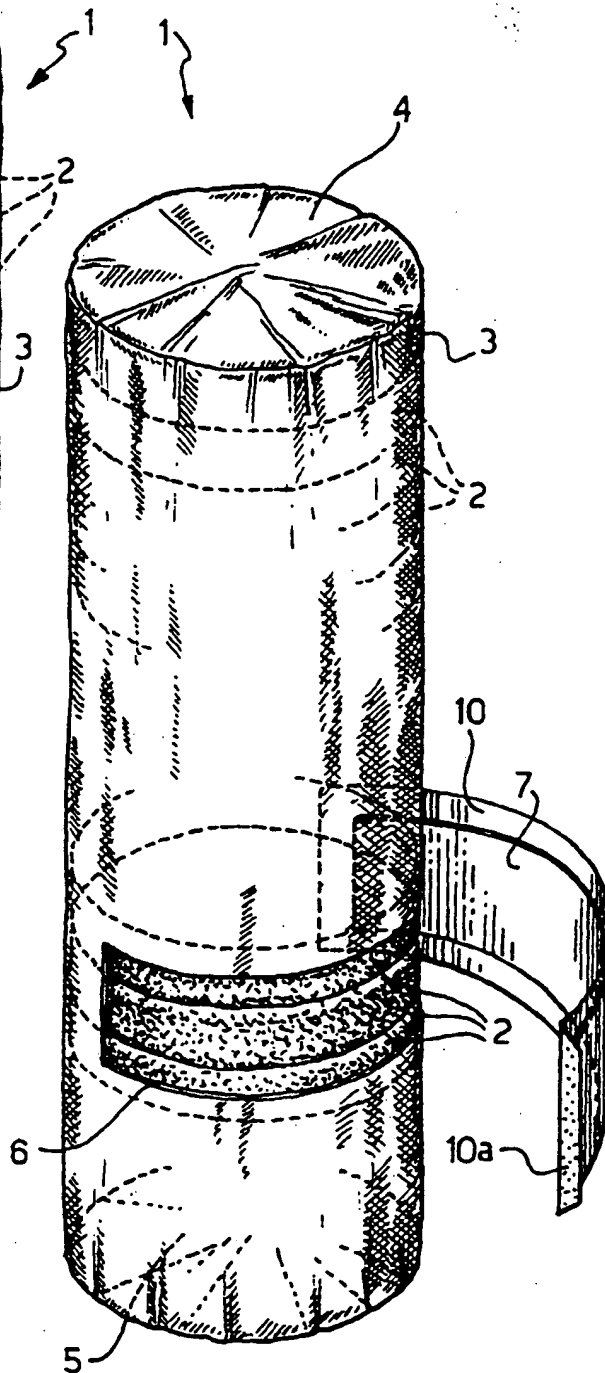


FIG. 6



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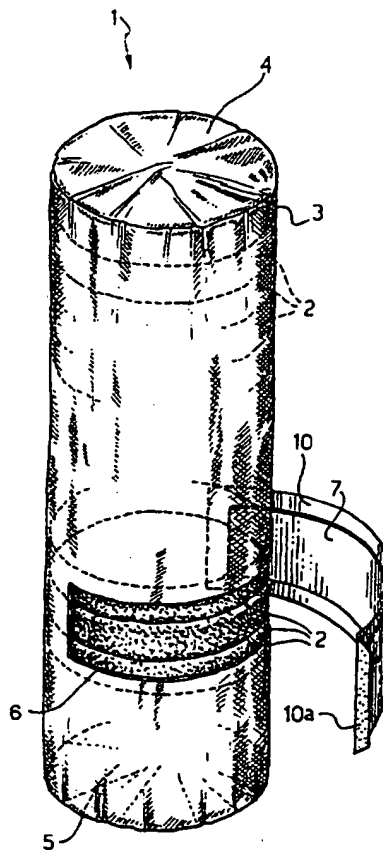


FIG.6

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 12 0831

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			B65D
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	
THE HAGUE	2 August 2002	Sundell, O	
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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EP 00 12 0831

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